



**STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
POLICY DIRECTIVE**

Policy No. DOC 4.5.16	Subject: DAILY HANDLING OF OFFENDER NON-EMERGENCY HEALTH REQUESTS	
Chapter 4: FACILITY/PROGRAM SERVICES	Page 1 of 2	
Section 5: Health Care for Secure Facilities	Effective Date: Jan. 1, 1998	
Signature: /s/ Bill Slaughter, Director	Revision Date: April 18, 2006	

I. POLICY

The Department of Corrections facility health care units will provide offenders with a system to request health care on a daily basis.

II. APPLICABILITY

The secure facilities that include Riverside and Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facilities, Montana State Prison, Montana Women's Prison, and the private and regional facilities contracted to the Department of Corrections.

III. REFERENCES

- A. *ACA Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities, 2003*
- B. *National Commission on Correctional Health Care Standards, 2003*
- C. *DOC Policy 4.5.17, Sick Call*

IV. DEFINITIONS

Health Care Request – A verbal or written request for medical, dental, or mental health services.

Triage – A process of sorting and classifying offender health requests to prioritize health care needs and determine place of service delivery.

Health Care Staff – Includes licensed health care providers and non-licensed health care staff (e.g., medical records staff, health care aides) responsible for offender health care administration and treatment.

V. DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES

A. General Requirements

1. All facility health care units will ensure that a registered nurse, or a licensed practical nurse with RN oversight, will document, evaluate, and triage each offender health care request.
2. The nurse will note the disposition on the health care request (e.g., scheduled for next sick call; dental appointment made; referred to psychologist), and log the request and disposition.
3. Offender sick call referrals will be handled in accordance with *DOC 4.5.17, Sick Call*.

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4. Non-health care staff may not determine whether an offender receives health care attention.

B. Informing Offenders

1. Staff will inform all offenders of the procedures for requesting health care attention during the facility admission/orientation process.

C. Daily Sick Call or Written Requests

1. Each facility will provide a daily means for offenders to request health care attention through sick call or written requests. Offender access may occur through:
 - a. a walk-in the clinic;
 - b. dropping requests in a housing area locked box;
 - c. an officer-assisted telephone call to health care staff; or
 - d. a sign-up sheet on which offenders may place their names.
2. All staff must protect the confidentiality of offender health problems at all times.

D. Records

1. Health care staff will document each offender request and disposition in the offender's health record.

VI. CLOSING

Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the health services bureau chief.